



## The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative

By using rigorous evidence to inform budget and policy choices decisions, policymakers can achieve better results by funding and operating public programs that are proven to work.

The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative, a project of The Pew Charitable Trusts and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, works with states and local governments to implement an innovative cost-benefit analysis approach that helps them invest in policies and programs with the greatest return on public investment. By offering cutting-edge tools and hands-on technical assistance, Results First helps public officials compile and analyze program, population, and cost data; interpret results; and make evidence-based decisions to eliminate ineffective programs and shift resources to those with the best outcomes for constituents. Since 2011:

- **16 states and four California counties have partnered with Results First** to apply this customized, innovative cost-benefit approach to policy and budget decision-making;
- **Five states—Iowa, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, and Vermont**—have completed the implementation process and have used the Results First approach to target \$81 million in funding to more effective programs that their analyses showed will achieve higher returns for taxpayers; and
- **Four states** have passed statutes embedding Results First analyses into their budget process.

### A New Framework for Evidence-Based Policymaking

This fall, Results First introduced **the first comprehensive framework policymakers can follow to build a system of evidence-based governing**. The framework has five key components, each with multiple steps that enable governments to make better choices, including: (1) program assessment; (2) budget development; (3) implementation oversight; (4) outcome monitoring; and (5) targeted evaluation.

Evidence-based policymaking uses the best available research and information on program results to guide decisions at all stages of the policy process and in each branch of government. By leveraging the power of this approach, governments can:

- **Reduce wasteful spending** by identifying and eliminating ineffective programs and freeing up dollars for other uses;
- **Expand innovative programs** by requiring that new and untested programs undergo rigorous evaluation and by identifying opportunities to target funding to innovative initiatives that deliver better outcomes to residents or reduce costs; and
- **Strengthen accountability** by collecting and reporting data on program operations and outcomes.

For more information visit: [www.pewtrusts.org/resultsfirst](http://www.pewtrusts.org/resultsfirst)